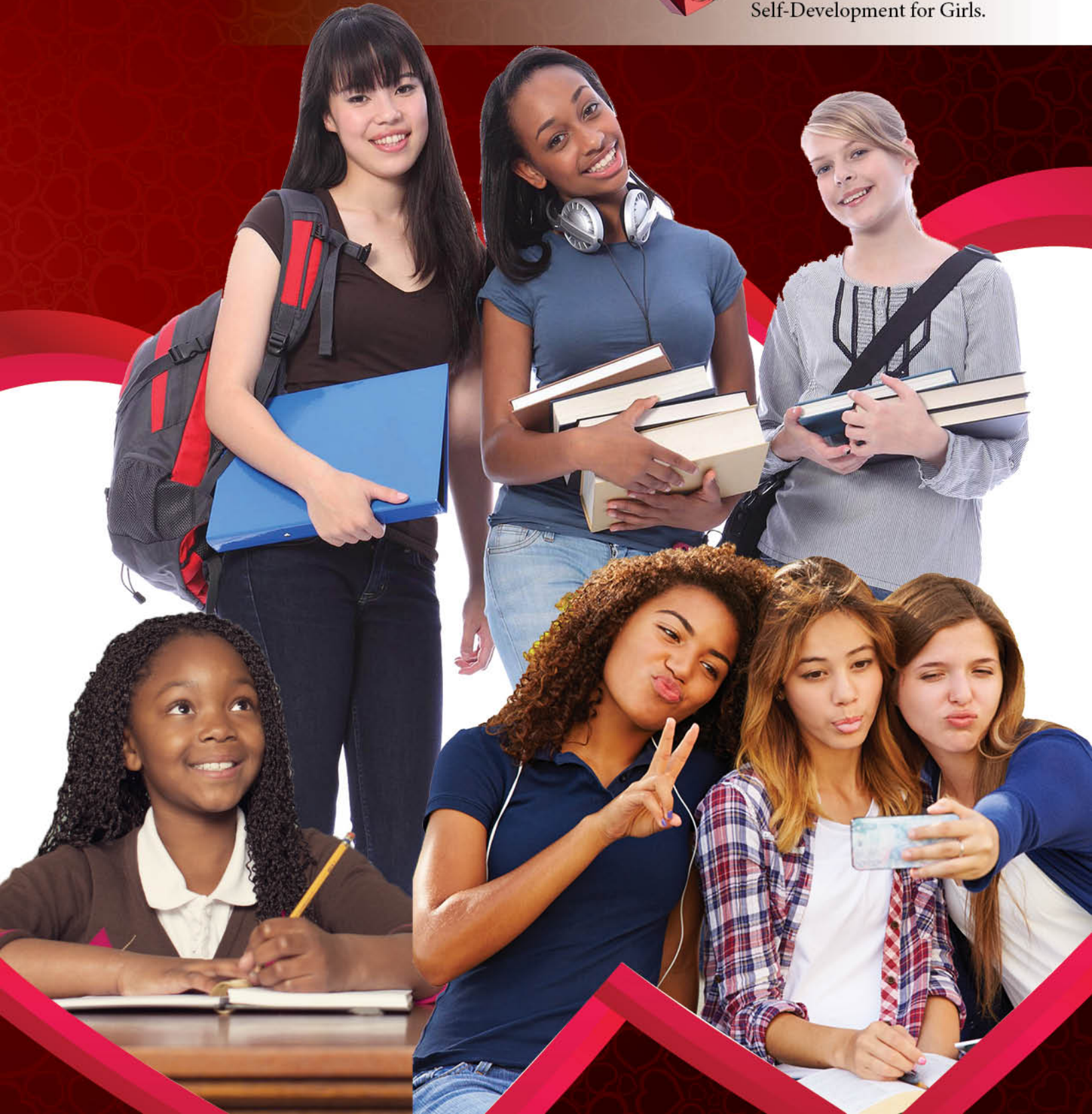




Nurturing Hearts

Self-Esteem and
Self-Development for Girls.



Index

Shawntá Pulliam's Bio. 3
 Mission Statement. 4
 History 5
 Nurturing Heart's, Inc. Program 6, 7
 Description of Program Courses. 8, 9
 Program Options 10, 11
 Testimonies 12, 13
 Letters of Support 14 - 19
 In the News 20 - 29
 Accomplishments 30
 Recognition 31

Shawntá Pulliam

INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER, AUTHOR, LIFE COACH AND FOUNDER OF NURTURING HEART'S, INC.

Shawntá Pulliam took a traumatic childhood, affected by parental drug addiction and incarceration, and turned it around for good. After expulsion from the 10th grade, Shawntá was enrolled in Catholic alternative education where she worked diligently to graduate on time, coming in early to study and staying late for extra help. She emerged as valedictorian of her senior class and attended Gannon University. However, Shawntá's unhealed wounds resulted in risky behavior, bad relationship choices, and ultimately a nervous breakdown, where she received just \$500 a month from social security and was given a one-bedroom apartment in the projects.

Shawntá began to confront her past, acknowledge her wrongs, forgive, built a real relationship with God and reclaimed her soul. She began a promising career with G.E. Transportation but still had an unfulfilled passion to help at-risk girls, as she once was.

In 2006, her vision came to fruition when she founded Nurturing Hearts, a self-esteem and self-development non-profit organization for girls, whose mission is to provide supportive leadership and life skills that will furnish and prepare girls 10-18 for a bright and positive future.

Shawntá Pulliam has not only evolved into a visionary, entrepreneur, motivational speaker and life coach, she is also Secretary of the Erie Policy and Planning Council, a member of the Board of Directors for the Erie Downtown Partnership, the Truancy Committee, General Electric's African American Engagement Committee, Erie Times News Diversity Committee, serves on the Board of Corporators for UPMC Hamot and is a member of the Women's Athena International Power Link.

She is a recipient of the General Electric Gerald L. Philippe Award, the 2013 Women Making History Award, where she received a Citation of Recognition from the Erie County Executive, the 2013 Phoenix Idea Women of the Year Award, the Martin Luther King Youth Impact Award and she has also been recognized by the Governor of Pennsylvania for her outstanding community leadership. Shawntá has been featured on the Word Network, Christian Television Network, and TBN. She is also a contributing Writer for Today's Christian Living Magazine.

Shawntá recently founded Shawntá Pulliam Arise LLC, where she provides inspirational speaking, life coach assistance and positive development programs for people from all facets of life. She has also worked as a facilitator for UPMC, a \$10 billion integrated global health enterprise headquarter in Pittsburgh, PA where she provided inspirational and educational seminars and workshops for women. Shawntá has spoken at small group homes such as the former Gannondale residential facility for girls, to world recognized corporations such as the New York Times for the DANDI Awards in New York City and General Electric.

She has been coached by one of the best motivational speakers of all times, Mr. Les Brown who has also written the forward to her new book, Hell Bent Heaven Bound.

Shawntá not only 'walks the walk', but grabs other young women by the coattails and supports them, along on the path to success. She has never forgotten children and women who are struggling with the same issues that she had to overcome herself. Her message to young women "the only limitations you have are the ones you place upon yourself", spreading her testimony and enlightenment around the world.



Mission Statement

The mission statement of Nurturing Hearts (NH) is to provide supportive leadership and life skills that will furnish and prepare at risk girls, between the ages 10-18 for a bright and positive future.

Our overall goal is for girls to become self-sufficient adults equipped with the capacity to continually evolve emotionally, mentally, physically, spiritually and financially; to build strong support units and ultimately contribute back into their community.



History

The organization's founder, Shawnta' Pulliam, was inspired to give back to her community by helping girls break the cycle of poverty, abuse, teen pregnancy and poor life-choices. She recognized there was a lack of understanding of the complexity of the needs of girls, and that existing services fell short of meeting their gender-specific needs. She also knew it was possible to pursue a dream and for a girl to transform herself, because she herself experienced this transformation. She was one of these kids a few years ago and with a little help, changed her own life.

Since 2005 Nurturing Hearts has helped over 2500 girls and young women to transform their own self-image and break the cycle of depression and abuse many of them had been stuck in. The genesis of the program took place in August 2005, when Nurturing Hearts launched its 6-month Positive Self Esteem and Healthy Lifestyle Program. The first participants in the program were residents of a home for runaways, victims of abuse, and girls with substance abuse issues. Remarkably, after completing Nurturing Heart's 6-month program the outlook of these girls and young women changed. The girls and their caretakers all reported tremendous developmental progress, and since that first workshop series we have continued to improve and build upon the curriculum and pedagogy.

Nurturing Hearts is not just a good 'idea.' Our approach works and it is helping the kids in our community who need it the most.

Shawnta' Pulliam is the Founder and CEO of Nurturing Heart's. Ms. Pulliam has been working with youth for over 18 years with an extensive background as a counselor, life coach, motivational speaker, community program designer as well as law enforcement background. However, one of her greatest assets in motivating participants is that Ms. Pulliam speaks from experiences, supports and accompanies each girl through her journey. She herself was once a troubled teen who grew up without a father and from the inner city. Ms. Pulliam's daunting past, her present success and passion for the youth of Erie County, is the Heart of Nurturing Hearts. I believe that many are called to do the work that she does, but only few are chosen and create change. Ms. Pulliam is one of the chosen life changers.

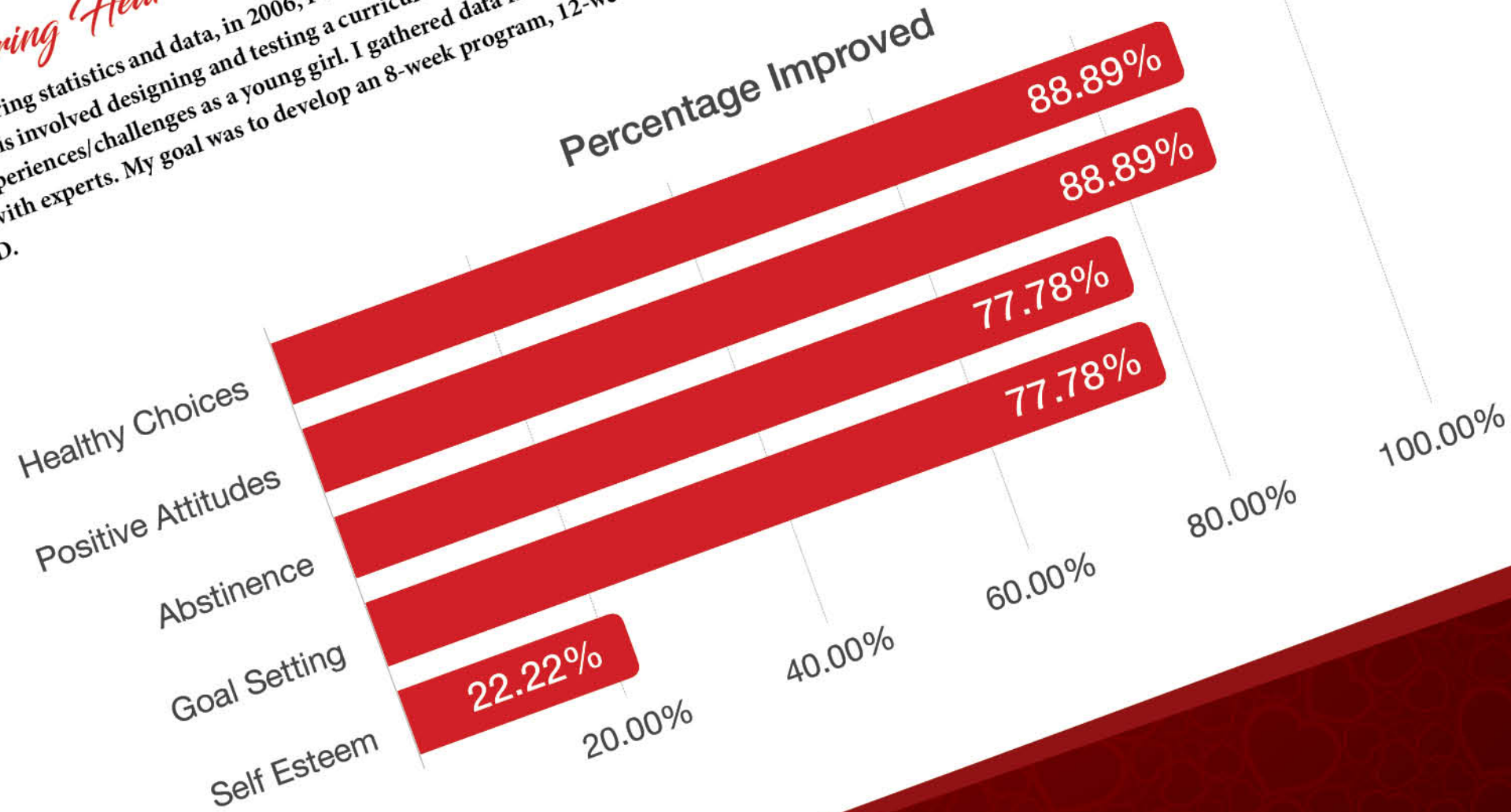


Nurturing Heart's, Inc. is now an Evidence Based Curriculum/ Program for Girls!

After much long research, gathering statistics and data, in 2006, I designed and created Nurturing Heart's, Inc, whose mission is to provide supportive leadership and life skills, that prepare girls 10-18 for a bright and positive future. This involved designing and testing a curriculum, that would help girls think more positive about themselves, and their future. I also used what I knew about the community I grew up in, my personal struggles, and experiences/challenges as a young girl. I gathered data from my students, received feedback from schools we provided services to, as well as parents. In addition, to utilizing my psychology background and partnering with experts. My goal was to develop an 8-week program, 12-week program and 20-week program curriculum, for girls ages 10-18 that works. I am Blessed to say...We Did It!

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED.

Here is our report below:



Description of Nurturing Heart's Program Courses

NURTURING HEART'S POSITIVE SELF-ESTEEM/POSITIVE THINKING EVIDENCE-BASED COURSE:
This course is designed to help girls think more positive about themselves, recognize their unique strengths, talents, gifts and abilities. Through positive affirmations and learning how to meditate and focus on positive thoughts, girls will be encouraged and motivated to go after their dreams, despite their negative background or present circumstance. The focus of the course is to develop positive attitudes, learn self-motivation techniques and emotional healing; to rid of low self-esteem and negative thinking using lectures, group exercises and role plays.

NURTURING HEART'S HEALTHY LIFESTYLE EVIDENCE-BASED COURSE:
This course is designed to help girls develop positive & healthy relationships with themselves as well as others. The girls will be taught how to properly respond when they are angry, and learn the difference between: aggressive, passive and assertive and how to respond and communicate assertively. This course also teaches the importance of controlling their emotions by using lectures, testimonies, role plays and learning response techniques.

NURTURING HEART'S D&A EVIDENCE-BASED PREVENTION COURSE:
This course is designed to educate girls on the risks and health hazards of abusing drugs and alcohol (mind, body and spirit) and empowering them to make better choices through the use of lectures, role plays, group exercises and testimonies from recovering addicts.

NURTURING HEART'S GOAL SETTING & EVIDENCE-BASED COURSE:
The purpose of the Nurturing Hearts goal setting course is to encourage and motivate each student to see beyond their present, and plan for their future. Allowing each student to serve as a Visionary and direct their future, each student will create an ISP (Individual Service Plan) for their lives in the areas of: School, Career, Family, Health and Relationships, with the assistance of a mentor and/or class facilitator.

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Nurturing Heart's Inc.

EVIDENCE BASED, POSITIVE THINKING/POSITIVE SELF-ESTEEM, HEALTHY LIFESTYLE, GOAL SETTING AND D & A PREVENTION PROGRAM, FOR AT-RISK GIRLS.

20-WEEK PROGRAM ONE DAY A WEEK (5 MONTHS)

- Facilitator:
- Incentive (gift card)
- T-shirts
- Journals
- Arts & Crafts/Certificate of completion
- Food/Snacks

* 20 week program includes the following courses: positive self-esteem, healthy lifestyle, goal setting and drug & alcohol prevention courses.

12 WEEK PROGRAM ONE DAY A WEEK (3 MONTHS)

- Facilitator:
- Incentive (gift card)
- T-shirts
- Journals
- Arts & Crafts/Certificate of completion
- Food/Snacks

*12-week program includes: positive self-esteem, healthy lifestyle, and goal setting courses.

*Each program above is geared towards 10 students.
 *Pro-active and reactive programs available upon request.
 *Program grade categories include 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-9, 10-11, 12-14, 15-18 available upon request.

8 WEEK PROGRAM ONE DAY A WEEK (2 MONTHS)

- Facilitator
- Incentive (gift card)
- T-shirts
- Journals
- Arts & Crafts/Certificate of completion
- Food/Snacks

*8-week program includes: positive self-esteem & healthy lifestyle courses



Nurturing Heart's Testimonies

BRIANA'S TESTIMONY

In Nurturing Hearts, I have learned how to become a mature young woman, to strive for what I want and believe in myself. Ms. Pulliam helped me with my problems. Nurturing Hearts made me feel I could do anything in life that I want, if I follow my goals. Since I've been in Nurturing Hearts I've increased my self-esteem. I thank Miss Pulliam for everything she has done for me. Without this program, my friends and Ms. Pulliam I don't know where I would be right now. I thank everybody.

MEGAN'S TESTIMONY

What Nurturing Hearts means to me is to have a positive outlook on life. It shows girls their worth and to believe in yourself. To stand up when something is wrong is possible if you believe in yourself. Nurturing Hearts has taught me many valuable things. Also, that it is best to surround yourself and to always lend a helping hand to those in need. Nurturing Hearts has also gotten me a summer job with Erie Homes for Children and Adults.

JESSICA'S TESTIMONY

Nurturing Hearts to me is a comfortable atmosphere. You can be yourself around the other girls. We learned about self-confidence. Self-confidence is not about being pretty, it's about knowing who you are and loving and accepting it. I learned I am a beautiful young woman with potential and success in the future.

TALASIA'S TESTIMONY

My name is Talasia, I'm 16 years old and I attend East high school. In Nurturing Hearts I have learned to be more confident, to love myself and achieve my goals. This program made me take my goals more seriously. It also showed me as my generation grows to never give into peer pressure, be your own person and never be a follower, following negative people gets you nowhere. Keep yourself around positive uplifting people. Thanks Ms. Shawnta; and thank you all.



JASMINE'S TESTIMONY

Good evening, my name is Jasmine. I am 16 years old, and currently an A, B student at East high school. I am a junior and have been a part of the Nurturing Hearts program for 2 years now. I've been in the Nurturing Hearts program since my sophomore year. I've been a junior volleyball player since my sophomore year. I've been funny girls. Joining this program I have met some wonderful and extremely learned that you must love yourself to the fullest before giving love to anyone, and extremely put myself first. I have set goals in my life so I can begin my dream for a career as a news reporter. I want to thank Founder my big sister, our amazing and beautiful teacher Ms. Shawnta' Pulliam. She has been a huge help for me in my difficult times. UPDATE: Jasmine has been accepted into Gannon University for fall 2016!

LASHUNDRIA'S TESTIMONY

To me Nurturing Hearts is a program where young girls can clear their minds, build their self-esteem, and find the love in themselves. I've learned to be a real woman, it's not about your hair, your make up or even what you wear! It's about being strong and finding who you really are, and improving your weaknesses and surrounding yourself with positive people. In the generation that were coming upon, it is very judge mental, violent, and very competitive but Ms. Shawnta' showed me that if I strive for what I want, believe in myself and surround myself with positive people and things, Nothing is impossible! Nurturing Hearts has also gotten me a summer job with UPMC Hospital. UPDATE: Lashundria has been accepted into PTI for medical assistant.

DIAMONIQUE'S TESTIMONY

My name is Diamonique, I'm 17 years old and I attend Central Tech High school. I plan on working for a couple years after high school and then going into the armed forces. I also want to go to college for marine biology. I've been in Nurturing /Hearts for 3 years now and it has taught me so much. We learned how to keep a positive self-esteem, the difference between love and lust, modeling skills and success. I enjoyed the group because everyone always had a good time and we were like a family. Ms. Shawnta' really pushes us to succeed and try new things sand meet different types of people. I appreciate the support from family, friends, the Nurturing Hearts group, and Miss Shawnta'. It feels good to know that they care and want me to succeed in life. I promise to make you all proud!





Brian J. Polito, CPA
Superintendent of Schools

Bea Habursky
Assistant Superintendent

Board of School Directors

Frank Petrungrar, Jr.
President

John C. Harkins
Vice President

Linda Aleksandrowicz

Edward M. Brzezinski

Robert S. Casillo

Robbie Fabrizi

Angela McNair

Mary Frances Schenley

Thomas A. Spagel

Angela G. Jones
Secretary

August 8, 2017

Ms. Shawnta' Pullium
Nurturing Hearts
P.O. Box 653
Erie, PA 16512

Dear Ms. Pullium:

The testimonials of Erie's Public Schools students who have completed the Nurturing Hearts program demonstrate its positive impact on the lives of our youth.

The young women of today are in great need of the leadership and life skills that your program offers to assist them in the life challenges they face.

We appreciate your work with young women in our schools and are pleased to re-affirm Erie's Public Schools' support for the program.

Sincerely,

Mr. Brian J. Polito
Superintendent of Schools

Erie's Public Schools
148 West 21st Street
Erie, PA 16502-2834
P: 814.874.6000
F: 814.874.6049
www.eriesd.org

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3325 Cherry Street Erie, PA 16508
814-874-6200/Fax 814-874-6207
www.eriesd.org

May 5, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the Nurturing Hearts program.

Ms. Pulliam has worked with a number of young ladies from Central Tech over the years. Her after school workshops focus on leadership skills and life skills that will prepare the girls for life after high school.

The students who attend her program develop a self-confidence and independence that is essential for success. Mrs. Pulliam emphasizes the importance of education and personal responsibility as pathways for opportunity.

As a high school principal, I support the Nurturing Hearts program as a way to support and mentor female students become productive, responsible members of the community.

Respectfully,

Pamela A. Mackowski
Principal

Mathew E. Pundt
Director of CTE

Pamela A. Mackowski
Principal

Jason A. Burgert
Assistant Principal

Pamela J. Tonty
Assistant Principal

Combining Careers and Academics for a Successful Future



COUNTY OF ERIE
OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Kathy Dahlkemper
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

November 17, 2017

To whom it may concern:

On behalf of the County of Erie, I am writing to express my support for Nurturing Hearts, a local nonprofit organization that provides self-esteem and self-development skills for at-risk girls aged 10-18, empowering them to have a productive and positive future.

Shawntá Pulliam founded Nurturing Hearts with the goal of preparing young girls to become self-sufficient adults with the capacity to evolve emotionally, physically and spiritually. Building strong family units, developing a strong support system and contributing to community life are also important goals of the program.

Because of the need for our region to provide more services for our at-risk youth, I encourage and support Ms. Pulliam's proposed Nurturing Hearts Girls Center. The Center would provide education, counseling services and afterschool programs for at-risk girls and juvenile female offenders in the City of Erie and Erie County.

As County Executive, I am all too aware of the continued – and increasing – need for Human Services in our county. An effort to reach at-risk girls now, rather than potentially seeing them as Human Services clients years from now, is an opportunity that is not often available, and one that Erie County cannot afford to pass up. As a community, we are only as strong as our citizens. Therefore, creating a healthy, positive environment for our young women, such as through the Nurturing Hearts Girls Center, would enhance the well-being of Erie County overall.

I encourage support of the Nurturing Hearts initiative, and I further commend Ms. Pulliam for her continued dedication to making Erie County a welcoming place for all residents.

Sincerely,

Kathy Dahlkemper



JACK DANERI
District Attorney of Erie County
Erie County Courthouse
Erie, Pennsylvania 16501
Telephone: 814/ 451-6349
FAX: 814/ 451-6419

Assistant District Attorneys:

BRANDON BINGLE
MICHAEL E. BURNS
ERIN C. CONNELLY
MATTHEW CULLEN
LISA R. FERRICK
G. MICHAEL GARCIA
BRIAN J. KROWICKI
JEREMY LIGHTNER
D. ROBERT MARION
JONATHAN NEENAN
MARK W. RICHMOND
PAUL SELLERS
NATHANIEL STRASSER
JARED TRENT

August 2, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this as my letter in support of Nurturing Hearts' creation of an outpatient center for female juvenile offenders.

For more than nine years, Nurturing Hearts has embraced the challenge of "redirecting" at-risk girls between the ages of 10 and 18. Its success lies in the ability to connect with these girls where others could not. How? By providing the girls with a sense of worth previously unrecognized; fostering the notion that they are in charge of their bodies and their lives; and supporting a belief that goals – once set – can be achieved.

From a law enforcement perspective, I believe the best approach to crime prevention is changing the mindset of those inclined to break the law. Show them an alternative lifestyle is within reach, and help them get there. A center or "hub" for juvenile offenders which emphasizes positive choices, self-esteem, and social skills can indeed turn them around – before they reoffend.

I am confident Nurturing Hearts' mission path will continue to produce results. Accordingly, I am committing Erie County Drug Forfeiture proceeds in the amount of \$2,500.00 towards the organization's efforts. I encourage you to join me in lending voice and, if possible, financial support to its cause.

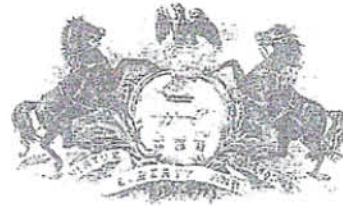
Sincerely,

Jack Daneri
District Attorney

JD:jl

140 West Sixth Street
Room 401
Erie, Pennsylvania 16501-1076

ROBERT J. BLAKELY
Chief Juvenile Probation Officer



Erie County Court of Common Pleas
Sixth Judicial District
Juvenile Probation Department
Erie County Courthouse

telephone 814/451-6220
FAX 814/451-7070
TDD 814/451-6237
e-mail bblakely@eriecountypa.g

July 13, 2016


To Whom It May Concern,

I have met with Shawnta' Pulliam, the Director of Nurturing Hearts, and am impressed with the work she is doing in the community.

I believe the County of Erie is in need of preventive/diversionary programs like this, directed to young women, not only for the city but countywide. This is a special population that struggles with self-esteem, safety, and poverty in their own unique ways.

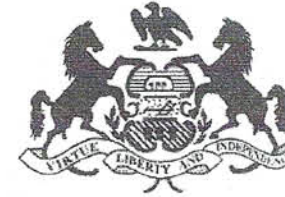
I like the organizational goals of Nurturing Hearts and wish them well as they move ahead.

Sincerely,


Robert J. Blakely
Chief Juvenile Probation Officer

RJB/neb

cc: Shawnta' Pulliam



JOHN J. TRUCILLA, PRESIDENT JUDGE

JUDICIAL CHAMBERS
SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA
ERIE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
140 WEST SIXTH STREET
ERIE, PA. 16501
(814) 451-6481

January 30, 2017

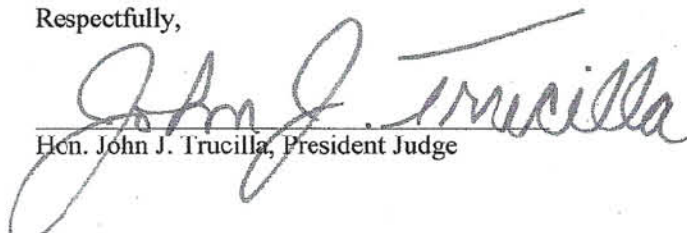
To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter of support for the Nurturing Hearts Program under the effervescent leadership of Shawntá Pulliam. Nurturing Hearts fills a growing void by offering services for at-risk adolescent females between the ages of 10-18 in Erie County. Nurturing Hearts provides these young girls with a requisite skill set necessary for future success. The program builds self-esteem and confronts many of the social issues relevant to adolescent females. Nurturing Hearts gives hope and light where there once may have been despair and darkness. Importantly, however, the program's successes are only possible because of the steadfast dedication of the Nurturing Hearts' founder, Shawntá Pulliam.

As President Judge of the Erie County Court of Common Pleas, much of my case load is dedicated to dependent and delinquent youth. I have had a front row seat to the issues facing adolescent females in Erie County and am keenly aware of what resources are needed to enhance their chances for success. Ms. Pulliam and Nurturing Hearts provide an enthusiastic breath of fresh air needed to guide and mentor our young females who may be at risk of not achieving their goals. Teen pregnancy, drug use, homelessness, lack of education, hunger and unemployment are issues confronted head on by Nurturing Hearts. Ms. Pulliam's Nurturing Hearts Program provides these females with guidance, structure, love and perhaps most importantly, hope for a brighter future and a way out of their current circumstances.

It is, therefore, without reservation that I support the Nurturing Hearts Program. Finally, I would also like to personally thank Ms. Pulliam for her dedication and service to these juveniles and helping to make all of Erie County a better place to live.

Respectfully,


Hon. John J. Trucilla, President Judge

JJT/rg

PRO BONO PROJECT LAUNCHED SUCCESSFULLY

Eighty-two participants from 50 local nonprofits participated in the first clinic of the Pro Bono Project this past March. "Our action plan is coming to fruition," said Amy Cuzzola-Kern, Ph.D., vice president of programs, The Erie Community Foundation. "Local nonprofits need professional support from lawyers and CPAs, but often cannot afford the costs associated with ongoing services. The Pro Bono Project opens the door for nonprofits to access the information they need."

During the Law Clinic, Atty. Mark Kuhar, Atty. Dan Miller and Atty. Mark Wassell shared free legal advice regarding employment issues and the Fair Labor Standard Act. The Pro Bono Project is a collaborative effort of: the Nonprofit Partnership, the Erie County Bar Association, Northwestern Legal Services and the Pennsylvania Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Erie Chapter.

The next Pro Bono Project clinic will be **May 25th from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.** at the Barber Institute. Nonprofits can learn about tax issues and IRS compliance. Registration is required by contacting Robin Koble at the Nonprofit Partnership, (814) 454-0843 or rkoble@cferie.org.

Atty. Dan Miller, Atty. Mark Wassell and Atty. Mark Kuhar recently participated in the first free law clinic of the Pro Bono Project, which is open to representatives of local nonprofits.



Polly Momeyer, Erie Home for Children and Adults, Geri Cicchetti, Villa Maria Academy and Pam Graham, Greater Erie Youth Symphony, thought the clinic was a tremendous resource for nonprofits by providing valuable legal information.

After the seminar, Atty. Dan Miller addressed individual questions from nonprofit representatives like Shawnta Pulliam, who is starting a new nonprofit.



Erie woman nurtures her own story



Liz Allen

Returning from a trip to Maryland on Tuesday, I made the 400-mile drive in exactly seven hours.

After baby-sitting for Mariah, my 5-year-old granddaughter, I wanted to prove you're only as old as you feel.

I also pretended I was still young by playing Cat Stevens; Carly Simon; Crosby, Stills and Nash and other oldies in the car -- on CD, which also reveals my age.

I haven't seen Carole King's Broadway show, but her music still spoke to me as I belted out the words to her anthem, "Beautiful."

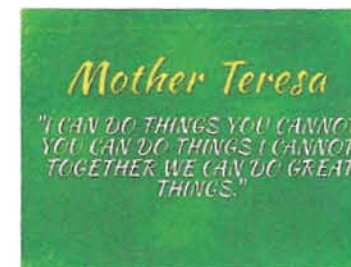
Her lyrics made me think of all my confident, beautiful granddaughters, including Isabelle, 8, who wants to be a doctor, a lawyer, a chef or director of a charity. Or maybe the head of an old-age home, she grinned as she watched me thump down the sliding board with Mariah.

"Beautiful" also reminded me of Shawntá Pulliam, 37, who started Nurturing Hearts, a self-esteem program for at-risk girls, in 2006. Shawntá runs her program while also working in security at General Electric Co.

I knew about the good work of Nurturing Hearts, but I didn't know Shawntá's story until she talked about her new book, "Hell Bent, Heaven Bound. One Woman's Journey from the Drug House to the King's House."

See ALLEN, B2

Inspiring Through Community Engagement



Additional Supporters

Anonymous Donor (4)

D. J. Jones

Accudyn Products

National Fuel Gas

United Way of Erie

Susan Oskin

Abbie Von Schlegell

Edinboro University Women's Philanthropy Council



UE 506 members involved:

President Rick Makowski, Building 24
Sergeant at Arms Ken Shaffer, (retired/GE)
Executive Board Member Valarie Pinetti, Building 10
Carl Daugherty, Building 60
Christine Peterson, Building 18
Karen Urbanski, (retired)
GE Cincinnati Bell Employee
Mike Green, Vice-President

Pictured:

Nurturing Hearts Founder and President, Ge guard Shawnta' Pulliam along with Charities for children board representatives, left to right, Rick Makowski, Val Pinetti, Mike Green and Ken Shaffer

EMPOWER!

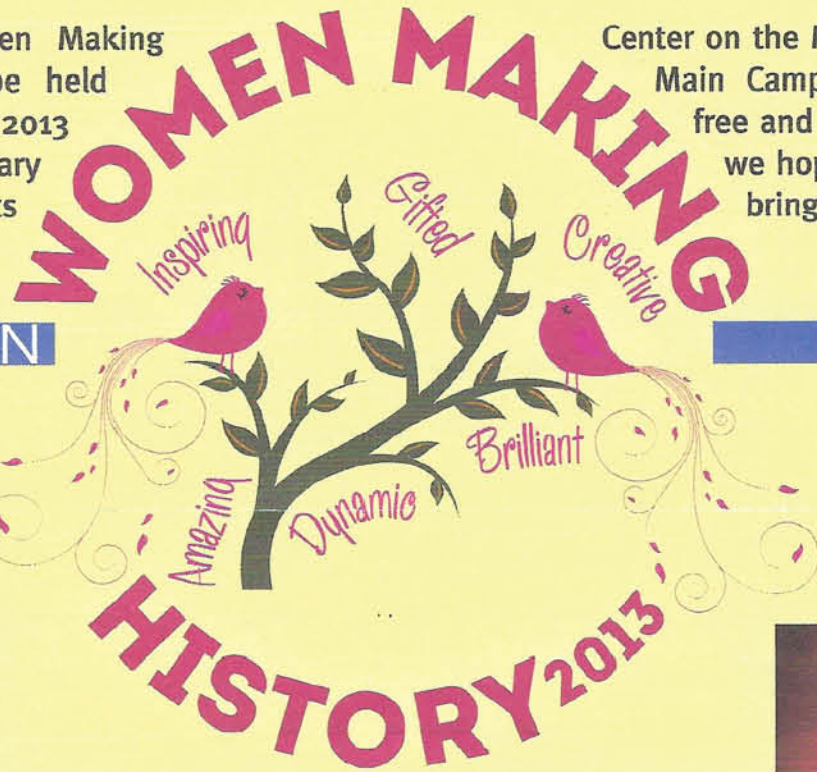
www.mcwerie.org

1039 east 27th street erie, pa 16504 (814) 455-4577

February 2013 - Newsletter

The 21st Annual Women Making History program will be held on Tuesday, March 26, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at the Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts

Center on the Mercyhurst University Main Campus. The program is free and open to the public – we hope you will come and bring someone with you!



COMING SOON



Top Left - Kelly Armor; Bottom Left - Sonya Arrington and her granddaughter; Center - Diana Hanes of The Flower Cart and Pattie Stempka; Top Right - Shawnta' Pullium; Bottom Right - Kathy Schriefer with Shoebox recipients in the Dominican Republic.



... See Story on Page 3.

ALLEN

Continued from B1

Shawntá grew up in a middle-class neighborhood in Erie's inner city. Her grandfather and her mother each owned businesses.

Then, her mother's friends changed, and Shawntá found herself surrounded by drug addicts and alcoholics, she says.

"At age 10, I was helping to do a lot of household chores. I was getting my brother and sister off to school. I was cooking and cleaning," she says.

At Central Tech, the "drama" disrupted her own life. "One year, I missed 75 days of school and was suspended

four times," she recalls. She transferred to East High, where, after feeling threatened by some girls, she took a meat cleaver to school.

Two police officers "caught me with the weapon but it was probably a blessing," she says. Without that intervention, she'd likely be wearing a prison jumpsuit instead of classy business attire.

When Betty Kennedy reluctantly accepted her to Community Preparatory Academy, which serves students with mental health issues, "I had a chip on my shoulder," she admits.

A field trip to a Christian rap concert changed her attitude. She began to go to school early and stay late. She joined the choir. She started modeling and

doing mime. "I ended up with a 4.0 and being co-valedictorian."

But at Gannon University, with a double major in criminal justice and psychology, she slipped up.

Her book recounts life after her nervous breakdown at age 20, until, she says, her faith saved her again.

"The same deliverance is available to all of us today. God will

give us a purpose and a destiny to help others," she says. Beautiful!

Shawntá will sign her book at Barnes & Noble, 5909 Peach St., on March 14 from 6 to 9 p.m. Learn more at www.ShawntaPulliamArise.com.

Liz Allen writes about ordinary people every week. You can reach her at lizerie@aol.com or on Twitter @lizeriepa.

Program designed to help women

By STACY SKIAVO
stacy.skiavo@timesnews.com

The founder of a local self-esteem and life skills program will present "Overcoming Life's Obstacles" at UPMC Hamot today. It is a presentation aimed at helping women conquer barriers in their lives.



Shawnta Pulliam: Wants women to beat obstacles.

Shawnta Pulliam, founder of nonprofit Nurturing Hearts, will lead the program, which begins at 6 p.m. at the hospital, 118 E. Second St.

"The speech is about defining obstacles and the purpose of an obstacle. An obstacle is something that hinders and stops you from your destiny," Pulliam said.

Pulliam said she will occasionally conduct such seminars for women older than 18 who are going through obstacles in life and

need to find ways to overcome these obstacles.

Pulliam said she hopes that the women who attend her presentation take home a message they can use every day.

"The only limitations that you have are the ones that you place upon yourself," she said.

Nurturing Hearts, which Pulliam launched in 2005, is a program that includes workshops, goal-setting, activities and field trips to guide young women in the right direction.

Pulliam started her motivational programs as a way to give back, in part because she experienced hardship and setbacks growing up, including expulsion from school and a father who was incarcerated for much of her life.

Tonight's presentation is open to any woman who wants to attend, Pulliam said.

Registration is \$5. Call 877-6145 for more information.

STACY SKIAVO is an intern at the Erie Times-News.

MOVER OF THE WEEK

Shawnta Pulliam, founder of Nurturing Hearts, an Erie-based self-esteem and self-development nonprofit organization for at-risk girls, has been invited to speak Monday in New York City at the Diversity and Inclusion or DANDI awards.



The program heralds individuals and organizations for demonstrating outstanding commitment to creating a more diverse and inclusive world. This year's event will be held at the New York Times Building.

Pulliam is also president of Shawnta Pulliam Arise LLC, which provides inspirational speaking and positive program development to women, girls and communities.

MOVER OF THE WEEK

The Erie Branch of the American Association of University Women has presented the Gateway to Equity Award to **Shawnta Pulliam**, founder of Nurturing Hearts Inc.



The Gateway to Equity Award honors an individual, group or organization that has shown by action and philosophy the promotion of the AAUW mission of equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

The mission of Nurturing Hearts is to teach young girls the value of positive self-esteem, how to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and how to develop positive relationships that strengthen the likelihood of their living rewarding lives that are a benefit to themselves and the community.

10A | Erie Times-News | GoErie.com | Wednesday, November 28, 2012

girls world expo

www.girlsworldexpo.com

SEMINARS

Session 1: 11:45am-12:30pm



Shawnta Pulliam

Love the Skin You're In
Shawnta Pulliam
Nurturing Hearts
(Room 130 A & B)



Session 2

Too Embarrassed to Ask?
(Hard Questions)
Sex and Relationships
Jeri Pistone

The Perfect Match

for Workplace Wellness



Eastern Alliance Insurance Group, carrier for the MBA Workers' Compensation Program, helps you reduce claims costs and return employees to work after injury faster, through our commitment to early intervention, proactive disability management, and Return to Work support.

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Wellness Coaches USA is the leading national provider of onsite face-to-face wellness coaching and "engagement building" wellness resources. Wellness Coaches USA distinguishes itself in the wellness marketplace by achieving impressive returns on amounts invested in employee wellness.



Shawnta' Pulliam, Founder & CEO

Our mission is to provide supportive leadership and lifeskills that will furnish and prepare at risk girls for a bright and positive future. We uplift young women suffering from low self esteem and/or have been physically, mentally, emotionally, and or sexually abused. Young women in group homes or foster care. We also offer the program as a referral to parents or students who feel they could benefit from it while building social skills.

We develop partnerships with social service groups, youth agencies, churches, government official, school districts, law enforcement agencies, magersrial district judges, corporations and businesses.

By the time the students complete the program they realize their uniqueness, self worth, that they were created with purpose, the true meaning of love for self and others, and positive changes in behavior, grades, and goal setting. The young women that we help today, will carry on their lessons to uplift their families and the communities in which we live.



Thank you Mr. and Mrs. Dafazio for your Ad Donation!



Celebrating 5 Years!

32 West 8th St . Suite 505 . Erie, PA . 16501 . www.nurturing-hearts.org . nurturinghearts@velocity.net

SHAWNTA' PULLIAM

- nominated by Candace Battles



Shawnta' is one of those rare young women who took a traumatic childhood impacted by parental drug addiction and incarceration, and turned it around for good. She says that every person she has encountered in her life has taught her something, whether that person was successful or unsuccessful. She attributes her own success in life to every positive and negative situation that has occurred in her life, realizing that it was God working His perfect plan. In fact, she lives her life by the verse from Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

One of her greatest inspirations is Mother Mary Beth Kennedy, who guided Shawnta' through her school years at the Community Preparatory Academy. Graduating as valedictorian of her class, Shawnta' attended Gannon University majoring in Criminal Justice and Psychology. She tried being a social worker in the juvenile probation field, but quickly burned out because she says she was trying to do it in her own strength and not in God's. She had now worked at GE Transportation for ten years as Safety Monitor and Plant Protection Officer, but still had a passion to help inner-city girls such as she once was. In 2006, her vision came to fruition when she founded Nurturing Hearts, a self-esteem and self-development nonprofit organization that provides supportive leadership and life skills, furnishing and preparing at-risk girls between the ages of 10 and 18, for a bright and positive future.

The sure-footed influence of Nurturing Hearts is permeating. There is the young lady who Shawnta' encountered in 2006 who was described as having psychological and behavioral issues. She nurtured the seeds planted by Nurturing Hearts, went back to school, graduated and went to college. The once troubled girl now works for the Philadelphia School District. Then there was the Central student who was failing, and sent to alternative education classes. By the end of her junior year, she was earning straight A's, transferred out of the alternative-education program, and now plans to become an ultrasound technician or dental hygienist. "Nurturing Hearts has been a big help, a real eye-opener for me," she said. "They made me realize school is important and to have faith in myself."

Shawnta' has not only evolved into a visionary business woman and entrepreneur, motivational speaker and life coach. She is secretary of the Erie Policy and Planning Council, serves on the Board of Directors for the Erie Downtown Partnership and is a graduate of the Center for Progressive Leadership. She has been recognized for her outstanding community volunteer leadership by the General Electric Gerald L. Philippe Award 2006, nominated for the 2011 Women of Worth, GE ICON award, and is on the Truancy Committee, Erie Weed and Seed, GE's AAF Engagement Committee, Erie Times News Diversity Committee, the Athena Powerlink and the Cambridge Who's Who of National Executives and Professionals.

Most recently, she founded the Shawnta' Pulliam Arise LLC which provides motivational speaking, life coach assistance and the creation and implementation of programs for people from all facets of life. She just received her first job under the new organization at UPMC Hamot as a facilitator to provide seminars and workshops for women and girls. She would like to one day open a facility for at-risk girls, and spread her testimony around the world.

34

AAUW helps Nurturing Hearts

Nurturing Hearts is a self-esteem and self-development nonprofit organization for at-risk girls whose mission is to provide supportive leadership and life skills that will prepare girls ages 10 to 18 for a bright and positive future. Nurturing Hearts would like to express its appreciation to the Erie branch of the American Association of University Women for providing a \$2,000 community education grant that covered program supplies and a modest financial incentive to open the participants' own savings account, a part of the financial literacy component of the program.

The locally developed program of six months duration emphasized positive self-esteem, healthy lifestyle, career options and financial literacy to 15 high school girls from the city of Erie and Erie County.

The overall program was a success providing three of the 16-year-olds with summer jobs. All the young women showed a positive change in their behavior and school attendance, and they initiated goals for their future. Most importantly, these young women developed a sense of purpose and self-worth.

The eighth annual Nurturing Hearts graduation concluded with a self-esteem fashion show on July 18, which was publicized and open to the public. The event took place in the Millcreek Mall with its sponsorship, and that of Macy's, Bridal Elegance, Francesca's and Buckle. Central to the ceremony were awards and recognition of the graduates for their personal achievements. Each young woman provided testimony about the personal growth that Nurturing Hearts brought them through their participation.

The overall program was sponsored by the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and the Erie Community Foundation.

Shawnta Pulliam|Nurturing Hearts Inc., Erie

Award Recipients



Sisters of St. Joseph

MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania, reaching out to the ever changing needs of the world, serve the neighbor without distinction as we work toward uniting neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God.

We fulfill our mission by searching out and undertaking whatever ministry may best bring about this unity. Ministries such as Saint Mary's Home of Erie, Villa Maria Elementary School, the SSJ Neighborhood Network, St. Patrick's Haven, St. James Haven, the annual Thanksgiving Dinner at Gannon University and numerous individual Sisters' ministries are some of the ways we fulfill our mission today.

We build relational communities. Whether we are among people who live in pockets of poverty and neglect, in middle class neighborhoods, or in areas of greater affluence, we are "sisters of the neighborhood" trying to meet the varied needs of people and to create centers of relationship and unity. True to the dream of our first Sisters, we continue to try to "divide the city, seek the ill and cure them."

As part of the U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph, and in our local communities, we work to educate, suggest actions and collaborate with various other groups and organizations to provide meaningful and timely responses to various peace and justice issues.



Nurturing Hearts

Nurturing Hearts is a self-esteem and self-development non-profit organization for girls. Our mission is to provide supportive leadership and life skills that will prepare girls 10-18 for a bright and positive future. We empower young women to have productive futures through holistic, gender specific programs, educations and experiences that are unique to young women. Nurturing Hearts is committed to community building, establishing relationships with social service providers, churches, schools, law enforcement and citizens groups. We broker these services based on the individual needs of each girl and her family. Our goal is for girls to become self-sufficient adults, equipped with the capacity to continuously evolve emotionally, physically and spiritually; building strong family units, developing a strong support system and contributing to community life.

ERIE'S 2013 40 under 40

ERIE READER

ERIE'S
40 under 40

Introducing the Class of 2013



Shawnta' Pulliam, 33

entrepreneur

Although Shawnta' wears multiple hats in the Erie community, she believes that "we all have a destiny and purpose in life." She founded Nurturing Hearts, a self-esteem and self-development nonprofit organization for at-risk girls to help instill in them a sense of purpose and self-worth; she also owns Shawnta' Pulliam Arise LLC, a motivational speaking, community program development and consulting agency, where she has taken on a new role at UPMC Hamot as a part-time facilitator for women from all facets of life – all while working full-time at General Electric. "We hold the keys of vision towards a higher level of change," she said. Born and raised in Erie, this poetry-writing belly dancer attended Gannon University, where she studied psychology and criminal justice.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead



Destination Erie:
A Regional Vision

ERIE READER



The Erie
Community
Foundation

Accomplishments to Date:

- 2006-2007 Life changing testimony from Aleya Spicer from Gannondale Residential Facility Credits Nurturing Hearts for changing her life for the better.
- 2007-2008-Asha Gore a student from Central Transition School gets re-accepted into her Regular School Central Tech, graduates and attends college in ATL.
- 2009-2010-General Electric African American Forums Ready for the World Event Nurturing Hearts was rated #1 workshop by over 200 students!
- 2010-2011-Life changing testimony: <http://www.goerie.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011310139925>
- 2011-2012 – First Annual Nurturing Hearts and UPMC Hamots Beautiful Girls Workshop 100 in attendance 35 signed up for our 6mo. month positive self-esteem, healthy lifestyle and career options program. Girls stated an increase in self-esteem and believing in their dreams.
- 2012- Pre and Post Test designed and implemented for the improvement of Nurturing Hearts programs.
- 2012-2013 Nurturing Hearts Receives Phoenix Idea Woman and Non-Profit of the Year Award
- 2014-2015 Nurturing Hearts receives Martin Luther King Youth Impact Award
- 2016- 10th Year Anniversary!
- 2017-2018 City of Erie partnership.
- 2019-2020 Launched drug and alcohol prevention program.

Nurturing Hearts have served well over 2,500 girls since 2006 who have shown positive changes in grades, school attendance and behavior, but most importantly they girls develop a sense of purpose and self-worth!

Recognition and Support letters from the following:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Governor Ed Rendell | Former County Executive Mark Divecchio |
| County Executive Barry Grossman | County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper |
| Mayor Joe Sinnot | City of Erie City Council Officials |
| Erie School District | Gannon University |
| Strong Vincent High School | Central High School |
| Women of Sandburg | Perseus House |
| Girls World Expo | Girls Scouts |
| Erie Business Center | Juvenile Probation Bob Blakley |
| District Attorney Jack Daneri | Chief Judge John Trucilla |
| Office of Children and Youth | |
| Recognized by Phoenix Idea Labs as the non-profit of the year 2013 | |



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814-460-5954

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UPLIFTING AT-RISK GIRLS & PROVIDING EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS SINCE 2005.

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